984 ~~G.389 a~~

THE PROBLEM OF PROBLEMS

by

CD222/5 CD 232/5

S. K. DEY

110

CD 241 (a)

~~G 258~~

17.8, 11, 9, 45

सत्यमेव जयते

DEY

MINISTRY OF
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

CD222/5
CD 23

Every month, Shri S. K. Dey, Minister for Community Development and Co-operation, addresses a personal letter to all Development Commissioners to share with them his thoughts on some of the problems which are confronted, from time to time, in the implementation of the C.D. Programme. In these informal and candid monthly communications, the Minister discusses various issues, poses questions, invites answers and also indicates possible lines of approach.

The present pamphlet is a compilation of excerpts from four such recent letters. Also included in it is an article contributed by Shri Dey to the "Economic Review", the fortnightly journal published by the All India Congress Committee.

The booklet provides a brief outline of the future pattern of planning and execution of the programme underlining particularly the role which the people, the peoples' associates, the peoples' representatives as well as the officials are expected to play in close collaboration, in the democracy that is to grow from the grassroots.

Director of Information
and Public Relations.

MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
AND CO-OPERATION,
NEW DELHI.

2213

233.5 DEY

New Delhi,

May 4, 1959

I

The time I have had away from the normal grind and rush of things, offered me a unique opportunity to look at our programme from a distance. I have taken this enforced respite as an obligation to carry out an analysis in all its implications. I owe it to myself to pass my findings on to you to be tested in the crucibles of your mind. I cannot for obvious reasons give you the total picture in one single letter. I propose to deal with the subject in instalments.

Now, regardless of what the world as a whole may say, we have made a magnificent effort during these seven years, with hardly a parallel anywhere in a democracy. I would proclaim this with all the force that I can command. The pattern of our work in the beginning would not be any different, were I to do this all over again. But, child prodigies suffer from certain inherent risks in their career. We seem to have been the victims of unresolved adolescence. Before we proceed with our study, it will perhaps be helpful to recognise certain basic facts of the situation in which we function in India today. We must then pose to ourselves the questions that directly arise from an analysis of our programme.

I would like to draw the curtain on this letter by remitting the first instalment of my study to you. Here in Delhi I have already confronted my Ministry with this.

THE FIRST INSTALMENT

The facts we must face are:

1. A totalitarian regime can get things *it* desires much faster than a democracy, at least to start with.
2. A totalitarian regime cannot continue for very long to be responsive to the pulse of the people. *Its* desire soon begins to diverge from that of the masses.
3. Democracy means the will of the people.
4. People without understanding based on education, cannot have a will of their own.
5. The so-called will of the people when they are ignorant, is one which has been conditioned by the rulers or been purchased by them.
6. Democracy is unreal directly to the extent the will of the people is removed from the decisions on actions meant for them.
7. Development in an under-developed economy is strictly proportional to the savings that people will make in money or labour.
8. The saving has either to be enforced or inspired.
9. The difference between democracy and totalitarianism lies in the manner in which this saving is effected.
10. If saving is to be effected in a democracy, people must share in the thinking and decisions that call for the saving.
11. Government organisation in a democracy cannot be a substitute for this thinking.
12. It can be in a totalitarian economy or in one growing in that direction.

13. Development demands efficiency at work and initiative in planning and implementation.
14. Efficiency at work depends on training for the job. Initiative depends on the inner urge. Inspiration provides the motive force.
15. Efficiency as also initiative are conditioned by factors common to officials and non-officials alike.
16. Officials and non-officials in India today come from one stock and share basically the virtues and vices in common. The distinction is circumstantial and not qualitative.
17. We are a country, yet divided by many loyalties. The centripetal force for unity is yet feeble as compared to the centrifugal pulls to which we readily respond.
18. Freedom cannot be, unless there is freedom from hunger, disease and ignorance.
19. Independence has been won, freedom is still to be.
20. False prophets are at large in substantially unlimited number who claim, freedom has been won already, or that there are short cuts to it.
21. There is short cut but to the pit, the road to the height being always long and winding.

With this background let us now put to ourselves some questions about our programme.

1. Democracy being still in its infancy, could we expect co-ordination of erstwhile feudal departments even at the State headquarters?
2. Can coordination be a non-fluctuating pattern even at a political level with the strains and stresses inherent in the processes of democracy?

3. If coordination is difficult even at the State headquarters, were we right in assuming that, by some administrative jugglery, we could achieve it at the Districts, Blocks and Villages?

4. Can a B.D.O. as the administrative head at the block level be a substitute for all the technical representatives?

5. Is it possible for the best of B.D.Os to function as the leader unless others above him treat him the same way as he is expected to treat others around and below him?

6. How do we get those above the B.D.Os. influenced to act the extension way? Have we gone far and deep enough in this effort?

7. In the prevailing circumstances is it sensible to expect the B.D.O. to be the captain of a team in the absence of democracy functioning at this level?

8. Can even 10 times the number of Gram Sevaks we now have in the blocks, cope with the fast expanding requirements of the people?

9. When we seek people's cooperation, does it occur to us as to why the people should at all cooperate?

10. If the Government programme is to be converted into a people's programme, the responsibility for the programme must vest in them. Is it enough only to give powers to the Panchayats and the B.D.Os? Can they exercise the powers without the necessary training and the understanding in the philosophy and objectives of the programme?

11. Have we been honest in our desire to impart this training and the understanding? Have we even planned the effort needed?

12. Has it occurred to us that even training for an understanding in democracy has to be a function primarily of the people themselves, if it is to be really effective? Have we *realised* that people cannot do it unless they are organised for this purpose through institutions of their own?

13. Have we understood what institutions mean, and made the effort to build and sustain them accordingly? Or have we treated them as mere rituals to be considered for the Quarterly Reports?

14. Have we realised that whether it is in the implementation of the programme or in matters of training, it will have to be a joint effort both of officials and non-officials, that cast iron compartments can be features only of iron wall countries or of ones which are travelling in that direction?

15. Do the officials feel the non-officials round them to be their brothers born of the same Mother? And, pray, do the non-officials feel the same way about the officials?

16. If the answer to (15) is in the negative, what serious efforts have we made so far to bridge the gap if we are to develop into a democracy based on the people, their servants, their representatives and their associates?

17. If "Community Development" is our objective, what should be the role of area development in it? Should it be incidental, a means or an end to it. Or should it be a condition precedent?

New Delhi,
June 15, 1959.

11

I discover to my surprise that more than a month has already elapsed since I wrote you last. I could hardly realise how time could fly past me so fast. I have been working, reading, thinking and searching within. There has hardly been a void in my waking hours. It is good, you will say. I should be happy about it. But, I am sorry for the delay all the same.

The New Approach

Here in the Ministry, we have done considerable thinking lately as to the role that the Ministry should discharge in the context of the demand for a people's programme. Now that we have been placed squarely in charge of Panchayats, Co-operatives, the other Community Organisations, and their formations high up, a redefinition of the role grew even more imperative. The conclusions that emerged are incorporated in the attached paper* "A note on the New Role of the Ministry of Community Development & Co-operation". I am sending this to you because a change in the emphasis on functions at the Centre can become meaningful and effective only when this is reflected throughout the line of communications. Our Ministry in particular functions with the States as a single line organisation working on a joint and cooperative programme. All the more reason why we should reflect the same impulses.

The Dual Role of the Development Commissioner

We must appreciate, while on this subject, that there is a significant difference between the Centre

*Please see page 14.

and the States in one matter. At the Centre, we have the Planning Commission which looks after the Five Year Plan and the evaluation of its progress through its advisers. The Community Development Ministry is to look after the promotion of the basic institutions and the nucleus extension programmes. The Development Commissioner in the State is the counterpart of the Central Ministry of Community Development. But the Development Commissioner is also the Planning Secretary and as such he acts also as the counterpart of the Planning Commission in the Centre. Thus, he combines in himself the functions on the one hand of a COORDINATING SECRETARY FOR THE STATE PLAN in terms of the Village, Block and higher units, and a COORDINATING PROMOTER in his capacity as Development Commissioner, of the basic institutions such as Panchayats, Co-operatives and other associate organisations from the village upwards, on the other. In the line organisation, the Collector, the S.D.O., the B.D.O. and the V.L.W. have all to reflect the same dual role at their respective points.

Democracy on the Move

The Annual Conference on Community Development last year was preceded by the Report of the Balwantray Study Team. Although no one could dispute the inevitability of the basic recommendation of that Team, namely "Democratic Decentralisation", there was hardly any one who could be bold and optimistic enough then, to say that this indeed would come into force in the immediate future. Some even had reservations as to the interpretation of the clause "The States have accepted the recommendation in principle". But, strangely enough about seven or eight States in India, as we all know, have already given effect to this vital and revolutionary recommendation. Legislation has either been already enacted or is on the anvil. In some States gigantic preparations are afoot, surpassing all expectations, for

the training of all workers, officials as well as non-officials from headquarters down to the village. The objectives of the training are an understanding of the significance of the change that is taking place, the new responsibilities and obligations to be vested in the people, their representatives and the official agency concerned. In Rajasthan, as you will perhaps have read in the press, every conceivable media of publicity—press, cinema, films, bhajans, songs, drama, music and puppets are being utilised for acquainting the vast masses of the people in the countryside as to the radical change that the new move ushers.

Those States which have yet not enacted the Legislation are also going ahead, albeit more cautiously. Democracy has an inexorable logic. India is one. Therefore, no State and no people can function in isolation from the common current of thought and action which motivate the Nation. Admittedly, we are a sub-continent with a great diversity of culture, language, race, and geography. It is inevitable, therefore, that conditions will vary from State to State. So also will patterns of thinking and administration. But, the basic approach must be governed by the common objective. This is inescapable. That we could proceed as fast as we are doing, goes only to show that our Government and our people are thinking fairly fast and on radical lines. Such a revolutionary move would otherwise have been resisted tooth and nail and would have proved an impossibility even in a decade.

"One Step Enough for Me"

In response to my last monthly letter to you, an esteemed friend from a State wrote me something which I cannot help sharing with you. He said—

> "The first instalment enclosed with your letter throws a powerful searchlight on the most fundamental and intricate problems facing the present generation in India. They will have

to be chewed and digested. The final answer to the questions posed may, perhaps, escape us, but, it will be a source of great satisfaction to know that our work is proceeding in the right direction. When the intricacies of problems are far-reaching, the future consequence puzzle and bewilder the mind. I draw comfort from Gandhiji's favourite line "One step enough for me".

This friend has summed up by implications in one paragraph, the immensity of the conflict in ideology and actions with which we are confronted. He has focussed the imperative need to make sure that the step we take is aimed to the ultimate destination; that we do not get desperately rushed to achieve the miracle overnight. The essence of the approach is embodied in Gandhiji's thesis "One step enough for me". Have we taken this one step? Let us analyse this as the Second Instalment of study. I would for obvious reasons refrain from answering the questions I posed in my previous communication. These questions welled up from within. They can only be answered to oneself; they cannot be answered to, or for, others; for, the answers by themselves will chalk out the course of action for the individuals involved. We are talking no longer in terms of administrative fiats or procedures. The question is one of the "Modern man in search of his soul". If he can discover himself on the assignment he has on hand, the question will have been answered already.

THE SECOND INSTALMENT

The goal for India being socialism through democracy, the growth of India means the growth of all her people. The socialist pattern demands that the under-privileged sections of the community will have to be assisted by governmental action to relieve themselves of the hunch they have developed as the beast of burden over centuries under the privileged ones. It has been universally agreed that this is to be done without violence. It is curious in this context that a hornet's nest should come down on the Government on the simple question of cooperative joint farming by consent as the future agrarian pattern. No other topic has been the subject of hotter controversy consistently for months. The heat has gone only to confirm sharply that every idea with even a remote flavour of offering a forum or a point of vantage to the exploited many, will be resisted fiercely by the exploiting few. The big landlords, the big capitalists and the big communalists—in fact all arch champions of a bye-gone age—will join these unholy combinations. With a bit of luck they may even have the support directly or indirectly from many an outside vested interest who lay in wait round the corner.

The Tug of War : Yesterday and Tomorrow

The Panchayats, the Co-operatives, the Associate institutions and their higher formations at Block and District levels will tend naturally to offer targets for occupation by all the vested interests. In nature, the devil and his attorney are far more powerful, at least in the short run, than the good husbandsman and the forces that support him. The forces of the nether world which pull in the direction of "Yesterday", let

us be sure, will not be confined but to a new party or parties. The "Reaction to the reaction" permeates every sphere of our life in India in as much as the elements of this affinity for the pit are present in some degree even in the sublimest of us. While we deal with democracy and decentralisation, freedom and socialist pattern, we must be clear, we are up not so much against political forces. We are dealing indeed with primordial forces working in the subterranean regions in each one of us.

Administrative actions will be devised as best as we can foresee, to secure social justice, to train the people and their representatives for shouldering their obligations under democracy. The Government officials will go through similar measures to understand their role in the new context and to act the *Karmayogi* for effecting the smooth transfer of power and initiative. But, training, instructions, official mandates and legislative actions fall in one category. The genuine reaction of the mind and heart falls in another. No legislative or official action can act the substitute for the spontaneous action that flows from a heart pulsating with the rhythm of understanding and wisdom. How do we bring this latter about? The Mussoorie Institute is training officials and non-officials alike from the highest levels. The Orientation Training Centres now increased in number will take up likewise the training both of officials and non-officials. The training curricula will be enriched. The training staff will be injected with a vitality and an understanding of the change we are working for. But, Mussoorie and the other seats of learning are far too distant from the fields of action. The impact gets attenuated fast in transit. How do we prevent it?

Epic Role of Government Agency Today

The political parties in the country appear still busy largely in arguments and counter-arguments, promises and counter-promises, exhibitions and counter exhibitions, to be precise, in mutual elimination. There is hardly any promise of a substantial

accession of strength from these quarters to the forces of reconstruction. Easy short-cuts, meantime, are sought as alternatives by the naive and simple, while they sponsore non-official organisations of diverse colours and denominations. But, alas, we all come from common stock. In the field of action, no wonder, we begin to yield to the dominating common pull of gravity. Some ask for contracts, some for special honours and privileges, some others take distinct political complexions. From whichever angle we look, we come back to the inevitable realisation that in a democracy which is still to be understood, grasped and buttressed by people at the grassroots, the only interim force that can be counted upon to act in a non-political way at least to start with, is the Government organisation.

Good versus Evil

The Government agency at the Nation's capital and at the State Headquarters, functions directly under the searchlight of the Parliament or the Legislature, a vigilant Press and a fairly well-informed public. Unhappily, these conditions do not obtain below the State headquarters, much more so below the District near the Block or at the Village. How do we prevent those servants of Government who lack scruples from combining with their counterparts in the people's sector to make common hunting ground of that hinterland? The forces of the neither world I have hinted earlier, do not function in isolation; they have their pulls all along the line working visibly or invisibly. How do we create the enlightened public opinion such as will support a conscientious civil servant and a good samaritan in public life joining hands to fight these forces of darkness, to work for the spread of light, and to add to their tribe?

The Next Step

Gandhiji mentioned "One step enough for me". We should agree fully. The one step is being taken

in the measures for "Democratic Decentralisation" which are now being hammered on the envil. But, mere transfer of power, delegation of authority or democratisation of institutions do not solve problems. If these do, why are we abolishing the District Boards and other intermediary institutions virtually throughout the country? Why the stink in such vast numbers of institutions of people? Why so much of corruption amongst petty functionaires near the ground? The logic is clear. While the one step has been or is being, taken we should plan for the next step. The next step perforce has to be one of correct understanding in the Government servants functioning at the District, Sub-Division and Block levels of the inevitability of the abdication of powers, of the imperative need to rise vertically to higher morality, conduct and efficiency as advisers to the people and their representatives in people's own institutions. There has to be a similar understanding in the People's representatives at these levels. Above all, there need be an understanding of the significance of the "Writing on the wall" in both camps, officials as well as non-officials, and a march together by the new forces towards the direction charted.

This is precisely what has to be worked out in every State. From information I have at my disposal today directly from States and from the press, the State of Rajasthan will seem to have made the most thorough-going preparation for the journey ahead together with an active involvement of a substantial section of her legislators in the process. The State of Andhra will seem to be proceeding the same way. I suppose, other States in India would also have been thinking and planning likewise. Our Ministry is trying to collect more up-to-date information about the progress of "Democratic Decentralisation" in the States and the manner in which preparations are being made to make this consummation a reality as against another paper ritual.

The Divine Law of "Inevitability"

The whole issue to my mind boils down to one of wisdom, of realisation that ultimately what will count is what happens to the people as a whole, that classes as we know are the most volatile of concepts in the fast moving world of today. The secure Government servant of today will join the insecure humanity of tomorrow with his near and dear ones sharing the common lot. This has happened already on a fantastic scale in a fantastically large part of the world in our own life time. The "Few" must wake up in time and get off the shoulders of the "Many" before they are thrown out. We have good lessons to learn here from the great British people in their historic action demonstrated on August 15, 1947, in India. Could we remind ourselves in this context of one of the four engimas answered by King Yudhistra in the Mahabharata, namely, that the biggest surprise of surprises is that with all the deaths around every day no one seriously considers that his turn might come next, knowing fully well as he does that it has to come inevitably? How do we bring the understanding of this divine law of "Inevitability" in all our workers? If we succeed, everything else will work out with the precision of the solar system. This my friend then, is the problem of problems. Simple, but the most formidable.

Note on the New Role of the Ministry of Community Development and Cooperation

At the inception, the role of the Ministry of Community Development was to serve as a "Messenger Boy Organisation", serving as a liaison between Central Ministries on one hand, and the State Development Commissioners' organisation and the State Government on the other, in furtherance of the policy of Government, namely, "Community Development is the method and Rural Extension the agency to initiate a process of transformation of the social and economic life of the villages". The development block provided the agency through which bulk of the development work under the plans of the Central Ministries and the State Governments was intended to be channelised. In this way the Ministry has helped in building up an extension organisation and providing the coordinating machinery for the various Ministries and departments of the Government to use for implementing the Plan.

On the above role of the Ministry the COPP Study Team recommended as follows:—

> "A corollary to the foregoing observations would be that whatever work the Central Government is to perform in the fields of agriculture, social education, health, rural industries etc. should be performed by the Ministry concerned and the Community Development Ministry would only coordinate their activities in the block areas.................. Simultaneously, we are aware that certain aspects of rural development cannot receive adequate attention in the Ministries in which they are at present being dealt with. In particular,

we mention cooperation and rural self-governing institutions. These two are so closely connected with the programme of community development that we consider that it would be useful if they are brought under one Ministry—The Ministry which deals with the coordination of rural developmental activities all over the country. We have earlier urged that all development work should in future be the primary responsibility of village panchayats and panchayat samitis. We have also stressed the comparative neglect of co-operative organisations and their importance in the field of rural production. Bringing these two subjects at the policy—making level under one common Ministry also empowered to coordinate rural development activities would, in our opinion, ensure more effective work at the Centre and in the States".

In pursuance of the above recommendations, work relating to the two basic institutions namely, "Panchayats" and "Cooperatives" has already been transferred to the Ministry. There is also the realisation both in the Ministry as also in the States that a programme sponsored, directed and dominated by the Government agency has no chance either of involving the people as a whole or of meeting their fast growing requirements. If the programme is to grow and endure, there must be democratic growth at the village and block levels, and the initiative for planning and implementation must shift on to the people, the Government agency serving as the instrument of the people.

The main emphasis in the Ministry will therefore necessarily be on the build up of the people's institutions such as the panchayats, the cooperatives and the other "Associate" organisations, and their higher echelons at block and district levels. The build up will necessarily have to be accompanied or preceded

by training of the people, their representatives as also the Government servants all along the line for the new attitude and work expected of them apart from their usual training in subject matter and the philosophy of the programme. All other activities in the Ministry must be so designed as to be subservient and conducive to the development of the community and the community organisations implied above.

As a corollary the role of the technical advisers in the Ministry will primarily be:

1. To draw up an extension programme which can be implemented by people's organisations in C.D. Blocks based predominantly on people's own labour and the nucleus funds which we have in the C.D. Budget practically in every field, and to supervise the implementation in the field.
2. To help Central Ministries to promote research in the problems encountered in the field, and to help extend the results of research to the field.
3. By way of sample study, to discover difficulties and problems faced by people's organisations in the implementation of programmes and to reflect these to the Ministries concerned with a view to help mould central policies so as to make these more conducive to the people's requirements.
4. To influence the formulation of the approach to the Third Five Year Plan so that there would be an assurance of a minimum level of development throughout the country, and that the States' programmes will be built upto the maximum extent possible in terms of the blocks; also to be in continuous contact with the Ministries concerned with a view to assisting them in the initiation and formulation of the Ministries' programmes in their respective fields.

It will also be the function of the Ministry:

1. To help supervision by the appropriate Ministry in the Centre of its substantive programmes in the States;
2. to facilitate the block being treated by the department concerned in the States as a unit for planning and development;
3. to formulate through the Central Institute of Study & Research a programme of training of high level officers and non-officials, and also to promote research in methodology in association with the Universities, State Governments, Our Training Centres, and other Institutions.

It is further recognized that people's organizations, which are the main assignment of this Ministry, cannot grow to their stature except through the day to day experience of the implementation of programmes which they can carry out on their own with technical guidance from the block staff and a modicum of financial assistance such as the C.D. Budget already provides.

It is believed that, by functioning in this manner, the Community Development Organisation should, besides promoting the growth of basic rural institutions, be in a position to reflect the will and problems of the people in respect of the whole gamut of rural development.

New Delhi,
July 9, 1959.

III

I have tried during recent months to judge objectively my own reactions to various stimuli impinging on me from different quarters. One does not get this opportunity often.

There is no disputing the fact that workers in Government, particularly those placed on key assignments, are working very hard, perhaps a little harder than is good for their body and mind. But, I find, there is an invariable tendency of all this work ending in brillian gymnastics of intellect. They rarely find expression in action down the line. So much of energy is invested in words, and forms of expression, that very little is left when it comes to the question of implementation. A paper decision often takes on the illusion of action. Even those who are charged with executive assignments begin to view with one another in gymnastics on paper. Because, somehow, even after these 12 years of independence, brilliance on paper still continues to rate higher than the unspectacular grind that an artist in action has to go through to produce the model in clay. Thus while I groan under the weight of an increasing allergy to brilliance on paper, I find that a talk with the village people or those who work in intimate touch with them is a sharp contrast. It comes as a soothing balm to the soul. I thus continue to oscillate from utter pessimism with brilliance at one end to buyoant optimism at the other over the naiveness of the soul and the virgin energy of our people on the ground and the workers near to them.

Three days ago, at the special request of the inmates, I visited for the second time the thirty Trainers of Block Development Committee members who are undergoing the orientation training at a camp in New Delhi. The camp is the first of a series we have planned for Trainers for the country as a whole. We squatted on the grass, smelling of the earth after a welcome light shower. We chatted with absolute frankness. It was indeed remarkable, the way these thirty people, hailing from different areas in different states representing different outlooks and habits, could get themselves woven within so short a period into a compact well-knit family, all struggling to assimilate for the task ahead, knowledge as fast as they can. I spent an hour with them. I let myself go and could forget myself completely. This alone will show that the camp is succeeding in imparting not merely an understanding but also an acceptance of the concept of Community Development in practice.

It seems that camps and sammelans run on human level with participation of people who are eager to give and receive, are the best form of training, we can possibly think of. Somehow, our institutions begin to dry up and like the rituals in Hindu life get divorced from all spiritual content as soon as we begin to think on rigid patterns. From what I could see of this camp, it was clear that we were starting the training of Block Development Committee members under good auspices. The future of this programme augurs well unless from the Government side, we try to stultify unwittingly the enthusiasm now generated in the non-official members to spread the baptismal fire. Your personal attention to this matter will be of the highest importance. Do not, I pray, leave it entirely in the hands of others to be dealt with according to the printed words. Let us remember, we value the non-official because logic is not the strongest point with him. We value him predominantly for his emotions. We talk of a combined effort of officials and non-officials because we wish to combine logic

with emotion. It is difficult to combine these two in one person or one group of persons. Therefore, we expect the two distinct groups in a democracy to work out the people's destiny by complementing each other's qualities. The two are an essential "must" when blended. But in isolation one leads but to death and the other to chaos.

You will be glad to know that I have been trying for some time now to develop for the delegates of Bharat Darshan the complete requirements of the farmer in my house. I am setting up a very fine orchard, a vegetable garden, a poultry and a fishery-*cum*-banana, garden-*cum*-picnic, spot-*cum*-open-air theatre, apart from flori-culture on a fairly wide scale. And all these at costs which are infinitesimal. I invest about an hour of my time every day on these. I am certain, a year from now I shall be in a position not only to give a first rate demonstration to every farmer who chooses to come to my house while in Delhi, but also to offer you when you come, to partake in some of the produce which will begin to flow by then.

The experience of setting these up is proving a healthy pastime for me. It is a good change anyway from the gymnastics on paper. What is more, it has given me for the first time an insight into the problems of our farmer and a first hand knowledge of how grossly inadequate the stock of our technical knowledge still is. Believe me, I would never have known these but for the facing of reality through these endeavours. I have inevitably to resort to the picking of all available technical brains for a way out of the day to day problems I face with pests, diseases and what not. It seems, our technical departments wait still to find the answer from posterity for most of our serious problems. Many of you will have a fairly big compound in the house. I cannot commend to you too strongly the practices I am following in my house. It will help you in body, mind and spirit. I am quite sure, it will even help to bring your children near to mother earth.

I have chosen to write this letter to you at such a short interval since my last communication, because I had the urge, which I failed to repress, of closing this special series of correspondence by adding the third instalment. In the first instalment I posed some basic questions to you. In the second, I dealt with the factor of inevitability. I elaborated the role, as I understood, that kind destiny has handed on to Government servants to play the *Karmayogi* in the second half of the twentieth century. In this third instalment, I propose to deal very briefly with the role that the non-official should play as the counterpart of the official for the joint consummation we have set for ourselves.

THIRD INSTALMENT

The Village Scene of Yesterday

When I was a youngster in the village where I was born, I remember, there used to be periodic excitement whenever there was an election to the District Board or to the State Legislative Council. Strange people, clean shaved and clean dressed, used to come largely from the District Headquarters. They held meetings with the village people and made promises as to what they proposed to do for our village and the neighbouring ones when they came to power, or how many rupees they were prepared to pay per vote as a contribution to some urgently needed programme in the locality. When cash was promised, this was collected in advance. For, our village people, I suppose like all others, had little faith in these strangers from the cities, who, once the vote had been cast, would be beyond reach for another five years. When there was a theft in the village or an incident, or when land was under dispute we found the Thanadar in uniform or the Kanungo with his troupe, as the case might be, parading it all over the village. The feast and the Dali used to "flow" in abundance. The village leaders played the local agents and hosts and shared in the toll exacted as the price for justice. We, children of the village, used to get together, watch the fun from a distance and wonder about it all. Sometime we envied the august strangers and fancied ourselves in their place.

When I grew a little older and began to travel about a little in my district, I came across at times, good roads, Posts and Telegraph Offices, hospitals and dispensaries located in the obscurest of corners. On further enquiry, I discovered invariably in every case

that these lucky villages were those which produced a Vice-President of the District or Local Board, a Minister or at least a powerful member of the State Legislative Council. Barring these cash payments for votes, or special amenities for specially lucky villages and jobs for the near cousins and in-laws, the representatives in those days had very little to offer and thought much less of any debt owed to the people. We made no complaints then. A foreign Government was in power to churn the cream out of the soil. It was but natural that the satellites of that power—officials and non-officials—would reflect in their manners and habits the same spirit of loot and plunder under a cloak.

The Scene Today

With the foreign power gone, authority is now vested in the representatives of the people in the Parliament and the State Legislatures. We have accepted the thesis that this authority at the centre and the State capital is in a most unstable equilibrium unless its centre of gravity rests on the people. This can happen only when we have progressive self-government institutions all along the line in which the duly elected representatives will reflect the urges and aspirations of the people and support or control as the case may be, the Government organisation functioning at respective points. This question of an organic growth of people's institutions from the village up to the national level, has been described in the attached note* entitled "Functional Democracy". To all those who believe in democracy in India, may I commend this for study and critical comments?

The Members of Parliament, as we all know, have developed the tradition during the years since the Republic came into being with its new Constitution,

*Please see page 28.

of grouping themselves according to their interests into Consultative Committees advising individual Ministries on the proper discharge of their functions. These members are in constant touch with representative elements in their constituency. During the recess in between sessions, they visit different areas in the country, study the programme on the ground and detect the gaps between parliamentary aspirations and actual realisation. They are expected to study the reasons for the gaps, in collaboration with their counterparts in the area from the State Legislature, and with other local representatives of people. These views and experiences are discussed collectively in meetings of consultative committees. Where issues are not resolved at this level, they are taken up in the form of special debates and adjournment motions or short notice and regular questions during the Question Hour.

Besides, members of Parliament, especially those who belong to the Informal Consultative Committee attached to a Ministry, do as a regular practice present the wider picture of the national plan to the people especially those in their constituency and project the local plans in the wider setting. A Parliament member's role thus extends from that of an informal adviser to the Ministry to that of an educator of the people. He also plays the role of a constructive critic, a purveyor of democracy and democratic processes, and many other roles in between. What applies to the Parliament members applies with equal emphasis, if not more, to members of the State Legislatures. Thus we see democracy working and growing from day to day in our Parliament and the State Legislature.

The Scene Tomorrow

The process now known as "Democratic Decentralisation" has already got into its strides. As I had mentioned earlier, nine States out of fourteen in India for instance, Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Madras,

Mysore, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Kerala, Orissa and Uttar Pradesh have already enacted legislation, or are in the process of doing so. The movement is spreading fast enough to give us confidence that within the next twelve months, every State in India will have come within the purview of this new process. The question that immediately arises is what role do we expect for our representatives at these institutions? We must recognise that these representatives are quite distinct from those whom we have elected to the State Legislature and the Parliament. At the district and lower levels, there is no decentralised power for legislation under contemplation. The bodies from district downwards are responsible primarily for planning and implementation of the overall plans of Government approved in the Parliament and in the State Legislature. In the process, these newly formed institutions of Local Self Government will enlist the maximum participation of our people whose main asset consist today of time and energy in surplus, working havoc within and without.

Our representatives at the village level—the panchayats, the cooperatives and other associate institutions—will be in the closest proximity to the ground. They have to concern themselves with the day to day planning of programme for each individual family. Thus alone can there be a plan for the village as a whole in all aspects of its life. These representatives will, therefore have to have a complete understanding of the resources and requirements of the village, the priorities, the special attributes and the limitations of the people. Equipped with this konwledge, the organisations collectively will have to make an all-out effort for the involvement of the entire population from the child to the octogenarian. They shall have to start the new conflagration of constructive effort, which will engulf and burn out the dross of factions and squabbles now corroding the vitality of the people in the absence of the right outlet and the leaders to lead them.

The Middle Tiers

The Local Self Government institutions and others at the block level will be slightly away from the ground. Therefore, their role will be one of general supervision and stimulation of the lower organisations and the planning and implementation of inter-village programmes. The district organisation, *viz.*, the Zilla Panchayat Parishad which is still farther away will have to grow higher in stature to provide supervision in depth and wider planning and implementation of programmes which are of inter-block importance. Besides planning, implementation, supervision and stimulation, these people's organisations will have the further responsibility of interpreting the national plan to the people at their respective levels and to place the local plans in the wider setting. They will have the additional bonus of supervising the activities of the Government organisation at their disposal, supporting it in all correct endeavours, and protecting it against all contrary and perverse practices and propensities.

Training People for the Task

Thus, the people's organisations from the village to the district, be they of the panchayats, the cooperatives or the other associate institutions, will have a primary and complementary role to discharge along-side the Government agency. If the people's agencies are to be equipped for this heavy task, it is of the utmost importance that they are built on sound foundations. Those who man these organisations should receive systematic courses of instructions on their own assignments as has been in vogue for instance, for those that run the official machinery for development all along the line. The training institutions run by the centre as also by the States should be thrown open for specially designed courses to the non-official members participating alongside the officials in the same class. There will have to be sammelans with all the ramifications, involving all our representatives from the

Parliament down to the village panchayats. There have to be sammelans for the colossus—the village people—combined with the traditional fairs and festivities which are indigenous to the soil and which strike a ready chord in the heart of our people.

The Question of Questions

A government continually dependent for its running on the official apparatus ceases to be a democracy sooner than one realises. The wild fire that is spreading around India, virtually the only democracy left till now in this hemisphere is a threat as also a challenge. The official organisation from 1959 onwards will have to understand what is at stake. It has to be alive to the "Writing on the wall". It must make up its mind whether it can play the role of the *Karmayogi* in the second half of this twentieth century to convert this amorphous mass of our people and their representatives down below into democratic organisations of people marching hand in hand with them. This is the question of questions. The answer will determine which way India travels—not Tomorrow but from Today.

FUNCTIONAL DEMOCRACY*

If you ask a citizen of U.S.A. what he is, like a flash comes the answer that he is an American. If he mentions the State from which he hails, he will do so only as a second thought. An Indian, on the other hand, would like to introduce himself first as a Bengalee, Madrasee, Punjabee or a Maharastrian. For him Indian citizenship is a second thought rather than the first pride. The fact that the Americans speak a common language and have developed opportunities with a variety of choice for education and employment practically without limits throughout the United States helps the promotion of the feeling of common citizenship across the barriers of local geography and the multiplicity of races that dwell therein. India, on the other hand, takes pride in the diversity of her languages and culture, her geography and climatic conditions, the galaxy of races and religions that stalk her soil.

Ram Rajya Now a Fairy Tale

The culture pattern that at one time was the richest heritage of India and held the people together, providing an undercurrent of unity and stability despite all the invasions into her territory and the incursions into her social life, is being threatened today. Partly so, because life in India is moving fast from its pastoral simplicity to the conflicts and complexities of the industrial age. Partly also because, our situation has grown immeasurably worse with the enormous change in the intensity of the "Land to man ratio" that the country has gone through during recent centuries. The population having increased to

*Reprinted from June 15, 1959 issue of AICC "Economic Review."

staggering proportions, the old simplicity of life is now a part of the Saga of the past and "Ram Rajya" at best a fairy tale. With land no longer able to support the population on the standards demanded by modern times, India needs rapid industrial development. It needs no proving that a large scale expansion in this sector alone can provide for a tolerable standard of living and sufficient employment for the colossal mass of our unskilled and semi-skilled population. Even our middle class intelligentsia can be absorbed in gainful occupation only through the development of managerial and supervisory requirements such as large scale expansion in the industrial and tertiary sector alone can make possible. This expansion cannot take place unless the means of production and the initial running capital for large scale industrial enterprises can first be created either from surplus or on long-term loan from abroad.

The Debt Owed To the Underdeveloped World

Such an indigenous surplus is hardly practical in the present circumstances of our economy and the rate of population growth. Large scale import of capital assets on long term loan does not look easy either. For, the countries which advanced through industrial development riding primarily on the back of the natives of the under-developed areas have still not learnt their lessons. They are yet to realise that the antidote to totalitarian trends in the underdeveloped world lies not in increased military aid or in the intensification of cold war potentialities within these regions, but, in developmental assistance by way of higher techniques and finance. Thus alone can there be a rapid growth of industrial potential with associated tertiary development such as can provide for large scale employment of labour as also of the middle class intelligentsia who have to be rescued from their present parasitic interests on land. The understanding that a fast moving revolution which is otherwise inevitable, cannot be averted is yet to

sink in those who hug on to the illusion of their security based on the monopoly of resources and the stockpile of arms.

Light Alone Can Beget Light

In totalitarian countries, be they of one extreme or the other or of the multiplicity of patterns in between, it is possible for the Government in power to force a sharp tightening of the belt. There, the voice if the people has been muzzled and the bayonet is ready at hand to go into action at the first appearance of even a ripple. Such Governments can build up the surplus for industrial growth as indeed they already have demonstrated in various parts of the world for the past 30 years and continue to do even now. The process involves in the short run, formidable cost in lives, prolonged miseries and privations in the many who survive the processes of building for the morrow. Besides, what happens in such countries in the long run to the spirit of man which has been apparently well crushed both in the individual as also in the community, is something yet to be seen. The new trends are too young to carry conviction as to whether force and hatred as "Means" can lead to love and good neighbourliness as an "End". If human history is any guide and philosophy has any value or significance, we can be fairly certain that darkness cannot generate light, or hatred generate love. Light alone can beget light and love alone can beget love. India has accepted the goal of socialism through democracy. She will be totally untrue to all that she has stood for if she were to follow a different course.

India Awakes To Independence

India awoke to her Independence on the trail of a cataclysm just ended and into a world in turmoil as the direct aftermath. By temperament and traditions, Indians are believers. For the people, Mahatmaji constituted a symbol which they could

believe without questioning. Those who joined the Mahatma in the prolonged battle for Independence had the direct baptism at his hands and underwent transformation as the Master willed. The large masses of the people stood by the Mahatma in the movement he launched. But the questioning faculty in them did not have the chance to grow; nor had there been time or opportunities for an organised system of education of the people in the new values of liberty, fraternity and equality which the Mahatma had placed before the Nation.

When Independence came it was but inevitable that powers taken over from the withdrawing alien rulers should vest in a relatively limited number of people who had fought the battle by the side of the Mahatma. By and large, they had to man the Parliament and the State Legislatures which the Constitution brought into being. The Constitution has been in action for about a decade. The nascent democracy in India has given an outstanding account of itself despite all our recognised failings. The fact remains nevertheless that below the State Headquarters, the countryside is yet to wake up to the full implications of her freedom. The countryside continues still to be ruled by officials far removed from the eyes of the Legislatures and far too independent of the will and wishes of the people. This is a dangerous portent for the present, much more so for the future.

Democracy Tomorrow

Democracy to survive and endure as a reality has to be worked by the perennially rejuvenated impacts of representatives emerging from below who will reflect the surging spirit of the people. This was possible in the past because there was a fight from the ground upwards against an alien ruler and people could be measured in their representative capacity by the records of their struggle or by other criteria which could, more or less, be non-controversial.

With the alien rule no more on the scene, and the past generation of leader-ship a declining factor on the time scale, old standards no longer obtain. New standards have perforce to be forged if the people are to choose their representatives in the future wisely. When we consider next as to how we căn stimulate best the surplus resources from the people and the optimum utilisation of these in their service, we find that "No taxation, if no representation" is the principle that governs the factor almost with a vengence. Unless the people can grow to be the masters of their own destiny, the Government cannot evoke the best out of them. Indeed, it grows even difficult to prevent people from abusing amenities created by Government on their behalf and at their expense.

Community Development

The Community Development Programme came to the scene early 1952 in quest of a way out of the impasse. In the words of the Prime Minister, who bequeathed the programme to the nation, it was to transform the people of India "Into builders of themselves and so of India." The Programme perforce had to' start as a cavalcade of officials doling out small mercies in mind, money and materials to the inert masses of our village people. But after seven years of organic growth with all the inevitable ups and downs, aspirations and fears, actions and restraints, the programme at last is tending to acquire the shape of a new movement. The movement is about to turn a crucial corner. A constitutional movement of the people from the ground upwards is under evolution. It seeks expression in its own institutions at all levels using the Government agency as comrade in arms. Democratisation, Delegation, and Devolution of authority to Block Panchayat Samiti and District Panchayat Parishad are now being worked out as inexorable logic virtually in all States. Some States are going fast; some moving cautiously and slowly. But the movement is there universally, inescapably.

The triple processes of Devolution, Delegation and Democratisation taking place in the field will soon assume the force of an avalanche. For, this is bound to give back to the mute the voice missing now for centuries. A voice minus a mature mind is a danger to democracy. Before the titanic force is unleashed, it behoves a wise Government to do some introspection as to the dangers and pitfalls involved and the way out to a new synthesis.

Theories At Large

One school of thought in the country proclaims that democracy is a luxury for an under-developed country such as ours; we should have controlled democracy of the sort that is emerging in an increasing number of countries around, us. Curiously enough this theory is advocated by the reactionary communalist-*cum*-capitalist-*cum*-feudalist-*cum*-parochialists and the so-called progressive fire eaters alike. While this is a fairly recognised feature of thinking in two sections of our country, a third section is growing equally vocal in favour of what they call a "Party-less Democracy." As far as one can understand, in the absence of definite documents on the subject, this is supposed to be the utopia where there will be no elections; villagers will live in the glorious isolation of self-sufficiency as in the days of the old. They will elect the Government of their little republics by a mere show of hands in unanimity or near unanimity as the criterion for the leaders elected. Parliament and Legislature it is inferred by implication, will vanish lock, stock and barrel. And if they are to be there, they will have representatives indirectly elected by the ground republics based again, we presume on unanimity or near unanimity.

With No Illusions

Our acquaintance with "Controlled Democracy" is sufficiently deep to steer us fairly clear of any desire to travel in that direction. If India deserves to survive, she can only do so on the merit of her being

able to build up a Government of the people based on democracy unadulterated. In such a democracy, man must have the "Right to live", the "Right to work for a living" and the "Right to receive what is earned." The issue is clear. This cannot be secured under "Controlled democracy."

The other picture however is innocuous looking enough to catch us unawares. Let us, therefore, analyse it a little further. A self-sufficient Village Republic even regionally, is a myth in the sputnik age where the world has already shrunk to the virtual size of a pea-nut and life is springing forward for a leap into the wider cosmos. Wider horizon apart, even in terms of elementary facilities such as the present air, railways, telegraph, telephone and radio communications, the revolution already under way in the means and processes of production makes it quite obvious that self-sufficient village republics can at best be a dream.

The Opposites That Sustain The Stream Called "Life"

Heat and cold, light and darkness, saint and devil are opposites which make for life and its continuance. A self-sufficient village republic consisting of God fearing people, thinking, believing and acting *all alike*. is a village dead before it is born. Life cannot spring from such an inanition. Democracy demands ideology and ideals in a perpetual but healthy clash. Only dead people do not compete. Competition which can lead to emulation is the spice of life. A living society must be prepared to harbour all from the saint to the devil with all the ramifications in between. The only safeguard needed is an air and atmosphere which will discourage corrupt practices in the battle for life whether of the individual or of the community. If our democracy is to be for living men and of an enduring and organic growth, we must see, it has roots in the ground, that its trunk, branches and leaves can get the free air, water and sun. How to work this out, is the question of the hour.

The Basic Institution

We have agreed that at the village, there will be the Panchayat as the basic institution. Panches will be elected by the people on adult franchise. Election can be on secret or open ballot. There is hardly a warrant for rigidity on one pattern or the other. But Panches, as we know, do not involve the whole village except on special occasions, may be once or twice a year if at all. Democracy we aim at, has to develop from a code of conduct to a way of life for every citizen. It must also not ignore the basic fact that the same ego of man is at work whether in the enlightened self interest of the Godly man or the mean selfishness of the evildoer. How do we provide for its expression or motivation? How, on the other hand, do we make sure that the present caste, religion, race, land and other vested interests in the village will not find their competitive and mutually exploitative expressions in the basic institution of Panchayats? We recognise that competition based on honest practices is a feature which is indispensable if life is to be moving and dynamic. We recognise also that the present trends are often self-destructive. What alternative expression do we provide to the competitive instinct in man and how do we harness it to the service of community? There being no room for vacuum except in death, we must provide creative outlets for life's multitudinous aching for expression.

Functional Democracy

The Community Development Programme visualises competing, yet complementary, functional organisations at the village to provide this very outlet referred to above. Every village can have for instance a number of functional organisations which for the purposes of the Community Development Programme are called Associate Organisations. The Associate Organisations can be the Kisan Mandal, the Bal Mandal, the Yuvak Mandal, the Mahila Mandal, the Dastkar

Mandal and the multiplicity of other organisations that can be created as single or multiple—village organisations according to the circumstances prevailing. All activities in the village from administration, village planning to those like drama, music, sports and other recreational programmes, pursuit of literature, poetry, bhajans, kirtans, etc. can all be encompassed by these organisations.

We have agreed to Panchayat being the basic institution at the village because it has its roots in our culture and traditions. The other basic institution should be the village cooperative. The Cooperative can be designed to provide the organisational, financial and technical guidance for the development of village economy consistent with growing modern technology. The cooperative can have its own sub-organisations or special unions like those of weavers, artisans, transport and building workers, brick makers, cooperative farmers etc.

The Panchayats in the villages will have functional sub-committees dealing with every subject of village development from children's activities to health, sanitation and village administration. The Associate Organisations mentioned earlier will be fully drawn upon for the membership of the functional sub-committees. One or two members of the panches will head the individual sub-committees according to their qualifications and inclinations. Thus, the village panchayat will function more as a cabinet with both collective and individual responsibilities. The adult population of the village will constitute the Parliament, and the functional sub-committees will be the equivalents of the standing committees or the consultative committees which are coming in increasing vogue in the Parliament as also in the state Legislatures. The cooperatives and the Panchayats with their Associates will provide active expression to a vast number of people in the villages who are too reticent to fight an election and yet have substantial

contributions to make to the programme of village development and village democracy.

At the Block level we visualise a Block Panchayat Samity for, the Panchayats and a Block Supervisory Union for the Cooperatives. We visualise similar apex institutions for these at the District level. We can consider functional sub-committees of the Block Panchayat Samiti or the Zilla Parishad exactly on the same pattern. The functional Associate Organisations at the village level can form similar unions at Block and District levels. When the time is ripe, these District organisations can have their apex organisations at the State level and the State apex units have a Federation at the National level. What then is the picture that emerges from the multiplicity of organisations that are proposed to be ushered in.

Growth Through Trial and Error

It will take a number of years, may be, a decade or more, to bring the various institutions and their associates into effective functioning and in mutual relationship at the base *viz.* the village and even more so at the Block, District, State and National levels. People and their institutions do not develop wisdom through administrative fiats or academic training. Administrative procedures and institutional instructions, of course, have their appropriate place. But wisdom denoting maturity of thought, understanding and action can only be derived from varied and dynamic experiences through which individuals or institutions grow by the process of trial and error.

Awakening the Colossus

The population in the countryside of India is a colossus. No institutional arrangements how so ever extensive in magnitude or imaginative in concept can take care of the basic training of such large numbers of people. There is the further question of securing

the services of a sufficiently large number of instructors who can continue running the training institutions without themselves growing stale in the process. Such instructors are not very large in number. The Community Development Programme, therefore, has been experimenting with the alternative idea of people training themselves. Gramsahayak camp in villages, which started on the subject of agriculture, was the first pioneering effort in this direction. Progressive cultivators from each village were asked to join their counter-parts from other villages in a Gramsevak circle, aggregating about fifty in number. The training was conducted in camps. The trainees trained each other by mutual exchange of experiences and also through discussions with official specialists and demonstrations conducted on the spot by respective departments. About a million people have already been trained on this pattern. These camps have been successful beyond our expectations. It is now intended to carry the same pattern of training for progressive villagers in all other fields of development, such as public health, women, youth and children's activities, etc.

The trained Gramsahayaks will form the nucleus of the functional organisations in the villages in which they dwell. They will compete with each other in extending their knowledge and experiences to their neighbours. Those who excel in this process will be picked up for higher camps at Block levels also for study tour of places of their subject matter interest. The process will be carried to the District, State and National levels. As the programme proceeds, there will be need for establishing short-term institutional courses for the higher level Gramsahayaks which can be provided in the respective technical institutions at State or National levels.

Complementary Functions Versus Warring Factions

When the process is complete it will be clear that at the primary village level, we shall have the Pan-

chayat as the statutory administrative institution dealing with the planning and implementation of all development activities. There will be the Village Co-operative which will be responsible for activities on the economic aspect of village life. There will be the Village School which will become the community centre radiating youth and vitality both in thinking and action. There will then be a large number of Associate Organisations at the village level laterally supporting these basic institutions, and where circumstances so warrant, balancing them for the right course of action. There will be the higher echelons of all these organisations at Block, District, State and National levels, complementing each other. The bane of party-politics which is now eating into the core of the nation in self and mutually destructive activities will, in the new context, have very little play at the village level. For, administration and the points of action at that level will be too near to the life of the people, for their representatives to get away with mere promises, exhortations or recriminations. The Associate Organisations which will develop and function on their own will have their respective subject matter influences and pressures to exert on the basic institutions as against the present suicidal strains and stresses in them.

The Final Picture

The pattern that emerges, therefore, will be one of continuing integration of functional interests at progressive levels. Thus the family with its varied colours and needs will encompass in steadily expanding circles, the village, Block, District, State and the Nation. A new synthesis of culture will emerge out of the debris of the past and the turmoil of the present. The particles of rain will grow into drops, trickles, streams and rivers and then find their ultimate consummation in the mighty Indian Ocean. Do we have an alternative for survival?

Camp: Mysore,
July 22, 1959

IV

THE FOURTH INSTALMENT

(An addendum to the Third)

I am sorry to inflict this one more letter at such a short interval. I should normally have abstained from this extra effort. I am already fully occupied with the long unaccustomed journey by rail, prolonged discussions on Co-operation and Panchayats at the State Capitals en route, study, and correspondence which continue chasing me. What from discussions at the State Capitals I have visited en route, and what with further rumination over the subject, I discover to my annoyance with myself that the "Third Instalment" I posted from Delhi before I took the long road to Mysore, suffers from a serious omission. It is this which will make the difference between a thumping success of the thesis put forward and an ignominous failure. The Mysore conference has perforce to grapple with the core of the problem. I have, therefore, chosen to inflict this addendum on you inspite of myself. The omission relates to the education and training of the people as also their representatives to whom we propose to transfer the substance of power and responsibility under the new scheme of decentralisation and democratisation now envisaged on a countrywide scale.

Education and training of government workers in the philosophy, objectives and the physics of Community Development has been the front plank of our programme ever since its conception early March, 1952. We have organised a fairly large number of institutions for this purpose. These, as you know, range

from the Extension Training Centre for Gram Sevaks to the Central Institute of Study and Research in Community Development at Mussoorie. We have had besides, a well-organised system of seminars for the cross-section of our workers all along the line ending in the bi-monthly meetings at Block headquarters of all the block staff including the Gram Sevaks. As support to this programme, we have produced a fairly large volume of literature—manuals, pamphlets, illustrated brochures, posters, maps, cartoons, etc. besides monthly journals from the Centre, the States and sometimes even from the Blocks. We have produced films, film strips. All these have been sponsored, organised and sustained by the Government organisation primarily by itself, for itself.

The first phase of the programme being over we began lately to think of the next—the "People's Phase" as we chose to call it. The resolve to open the "Second Front" came as a logical corollary. In our effort to attain this objective, we have concentrated till now on the question of legislation and administrative instructions. We seem somehow to have soft-pedalled, if not ignored, the vital fact that if legislation by itself could offer the panacea, untouchability in India, usury and the tyranny on land should have by now been relics of a remotte past and not the mounting challenge they are. Mandates and manuals do work wonders in a monolithic State run under a totalitarian Government. In a democracy however, legislative mandates, and the manuals that follow, have little or no meaning unless the people at large are a party to the purpose behind the legislation and they are organised to help in its translation in practice. The moral is clear. We have been over-busy with targets, and we are laying too high a stake on legislation and the administrative instructions relating to "Democratic Decentralisation". We have hardly begun to think of what should be crucial—the training and education of our representatives and the people they represent.

We have recognised that in the case of officials, the training and education should be conducted primarily in institutions run under Government although there will be association of non-officials in order to inject the non-official point of view in the training process. In the case of non-official representatives and the people, the logic is equally clear that institutions for their training and education have primarily to be run by non-official agencies although there should be close association of officials. The same should apply to seminars, sammelans and other forums, at National, State, Regional, Block and Village levels. Political organisations are not yet geared for this responsibility, although there have been welcome signs of a beginning lately. Which then is the agency that can sponsor, supervise, inspire and sustain the vitality of this non-official training programme from day to day without risking our national approach in the process? I see no escape from the conclusion that there is only one course open before us.

We have the Informal Consultative Committee in the Parliament which, as you know, takes abiding interest in this programme. I propose shortly to constitute a training and education sub-committee of this Consultative Committee. A sub-committee of the State Consultative Committee may be organised in the same way at the State Level. As would be the case in the Centre, the sub-committee of the State Consultative Committee can be presided over by the Minister in charge of Panchayats or Community Development, with the Panchayat Director functioning as the Secretary. Similar committees can be created at the District level. Where Zilla Parishad has come into existence, there can be a training and education sub-committee of the Zilla Parishad with its Chairman as the President, and the District Community Organiser or the District Panchayat Officer, as the case may be, as its Secretary. Training and education sub-committees can next be created at the Block level either

of the Block Panchayat Samiti or of the Block Development Committee. The process can be carried the same way farther to the village.

Higher level representatives will be trained at the Mussoorie Institute or the Orientation Training Centres along with officials. They can also go through study-circle camps of the type we organised early in the year at Patancheru in Andhra Pradesh, supplemented by special field study. Our Ministry is reviewing the position of training staff, accommodation, curricula and literature required for the purpose. The Block Panchayat Samiti or B.D.C. members can have their training in the special non-official institutions we are selecting in different parts of the country, with the trainers of these institutions specially trained in regional camps organised by our Ministry on the line of the first camp we have just concluded at Delhi for the Northern region. We expect M.Ps. and M.L.As. out of our Consultative Committees, who will have received their orientation in the C.D. Programme, to help in transmitting the same understanding to their counterparts in representative institutions down below. They can participate to some extent in the actual training programme, the supervision of institutions and the follow up of trainees.

The Block level representatives, whether of the B.D.C. or of the Block Panchayat Samiti, will organise camps and sammelans at the village level for the education of the mass of our people in the philosophy of our programme and the physics of its implementation. They will take the fullest assistance of the Government staff at the Block and District levels, especially those connected with social education, panchayats and co-operative departments. Some financial assistance will be made available for the purpose out of the Block budget. The Ministry will try to support this large scale programme of training of our representatives and the people at large by the production of adequate literature written in brief and

lucid style, free from jargons and polemics. They will also produce posters, pamphlets and monthly journals designed for information, education and training. There will be films and film strips. The pooled experiences of the States will thus be made available to individual States for adaptation according to local requirements.

The programme I have outlined above is an imperative "Must" if the mountain of labour invested in the legislation now on the anvil of State Legislature is not to give birth to the proverbial mouse.

GMGIND—L—14 M of CD—25-9-59—15,000